

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL MUNICH
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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, GW
SUBJECT: STRAUSS COVERS THE SPECTRUM IN ASH WEDNESDAY SPEECH

1. SUMMARY: CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS RANGED ACROSS THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF FRG'S DOMESTIC AND EXTERNAL POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN MARATHON (3 HOUR FIFTEEN MINUTE) ASH WEDNESDAY SPEECH TO FULL HOUSE AT PASSAU'S "NIBELUNGENHALLE." STRAUSS FOCUSED MAINLY ON DOMESTIC ISSUES, ESPECIALLY PENSION FINANCING AND NUCLEAR POWER. ON EXTERNAL SIDE HE PRAISED CARTER FOR HIS STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN USSR AND EE AND CRITICIZED WHAT HE CONSIDERS WEAK FRG POSITION IN THIS FIELD. STRAUSS CALLED ON FRG OVERNMENT TO TREAT ISSUE OF ALLEGED CIA PAYMENTS TO SPD CHAIRMAN BRANDT IN SAME MANNER AS ALLEGED LOCKHEED PAYMENTS TO HIM. AS EXPECTED, STRAUSS KEPT OPTIONS FOR HIS OWN FUTURE OPEN. END SUMMARY.

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2. FRG DOMESTIC SCENE: A. PUBLIC PENSION FUNDS: STRAUSS BLAMED PRESENT FRG GOVERNMENT FOR HAVING BEEN DISHONEST WITH VOTERS ABOUT FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES OF PUBLIC PENSION FUNDS. HE CLAIMED GOVERNMENT HAD ATTEMPTED TO SOLVE PROBLEM WITH SUCH "TRICKS" AS REDUCING PENSION FUND PAYMENTS TO HEALTH INSURANCE INSTITUTIONS. IN CSU VIEW, PRESENT PENSION "FORMULA" MUST REMAIN

UNTOUCHED. IF THERE ARE ONLY TWO ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF SECURING PENSION FINANCING, LOWERING PENSIONS OR INCREASING CONTRIBUTIONS, HE WOULD FAVOR HIGHER CONTRIBUTIONS.

B. UNEMPLOYMENT: STRAUSS TAKES VIEW THAT CONTINUING RELATIVELY LARGE SCALE UNEMPLOYMENT IS LARGELY RESULT OF "INVESTMENT GAP" RATHER THAN EXTERNAL FACTORS.

C. NUCLEAR POWER: IT IS INCORRECT TO SAY THAT FRG CAN LIVE WITHOUT NUCLEAR POWER. IF FRG WERE FORCED TO DO SO, STANDARD OF LIVING WOULD HAVE TO BE REDUCED AND METHODS OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION CHANGED. IN BROCKDORF ALL SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN GOVERNMENT WAS DOING WAS CARRYING OUT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S ENERGY POLICY. STRAUSS CALLED ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE ADVOCATING VIOLENCE NOT BE ALLOWED TO DISRUPT DEVELOPMENT OF NUCLEAR POWER WHICH CLEARLY IN FRG NATIONAL INTEREST.

3. EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: STRAUSS BROKE NO NEW GROUND EXCEPT ON ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN USSR AND EE. HE PRAISED PRESIDENT CARTER FOR HIS FIRM STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND CRITICIZED BONN GOVERNMENT FOR NOT OPENING ITS MOUTH ON SUBJECT. HE SAW NO INCONSISTENCY BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER SPEAKING OUT ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR DISSIDENTS IN USSR AND EE AND PRESIDENT'S DESIRE TO SEEK ARMS CONTROL AGREEMENTS WITH USSR BASED ON U.S. STRATEGIC INTERESTS. ON "OSTPOLITIK," STRAUSS LISTED THINGS "BRANDT AND FRG GOVERNMENT" HAD DONE TO IMPROVE FRG'S RELATIONS WITH USSR AND EE BUT CLAIMED THESE INITIATIVES HAD MADE NO RPT NO CONTRIBUTION TO SOLVING EXISTING PROBLEMS BETWEEN FRG AND EAST.

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4. ALLEGED CIA PAYMENTS TO BRANDT: BRANDT CALLED ON FRG GOVERNMENT TO PUT WHOLE STORY AND ALL THE FACTS ON TABLE. HE ADVOCATED USE OF SAME CRITERIA (MASS-STAB) IN EXAMINING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST BRANDT AS HAVE BEEN USED IN EXAMINING LOCKHEED ALLEGATIONS AGAINST HIM. IN THIS CONNECTION HE DECLARED THAT NEITHER CSU NOR HE HAD RECEIVED ANY MONEY OR CONTRIBUTIONS (ZUWENDUNGEN) FROM LOCKHEED OR ANY OTHER ARMS PRODUCER. STRAUSS EMPHASIZED THAT IN HIS VIEW NOTHING HAD YET BEEN PROVEN AGAINST BRANDT.

5. STRATEGY OF "UNION" PARTIES: STRAUSS CONTINUES TO REGARD SLOGAN "FREEDOM OR SOCIALISM" AS UNION PARTIES' CENTRAL STRATEGIC THEME. HE SAID THERE IS NO PERSONAL ANIMOSITY BETWEEN HIMSELF AND KOHL OR HIMSELF AND GOPPEL, BUT "IN WORLD OF POLITICAL REALITY," WHICH DIFFERS FROM "DREAM WORLD OF JOURNALISTS." THERE MAY BE DIFFERING VIEWS ON BEST STRATEGY TO OUST SPD/FDP COALITION FROM POWER. EARLY IN SPEECH, STRAUSS STATED THAT KOHL SEES CDU/FDP COALITION IN LOWER SAXONY AS BEGINNING OF CHANGE IN FDP'S POLITICAL COURSE WHILE GENSCHER

SEES IT AS MEANS OF BLOCKING CDU/CSU MAJORITY IN BUNDESRAT. STRAUSS EMPHASIZED THAT CDU AND CSU WHOULD EMPLOY ANY AND EVERY RESOURCE AVAILABLE TO EACH OF THEM TO ATTAIN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY IN NEXT BUNDESTAG ELECTION. HE ALSO UNDERLINED SIGNIFICANCE HE ATTACHES TO JOINT CDU/CSU STRATEGY COMMISSION.

6. HIS OWN FUTURE: IN CONCLUSION, STRAUSS SPOKE ABOUT HIS FUTURE PLANS, CAREFULLY KEEPING ALL OPTIONS OPEN. HE DECLARED POLITICAL GOALS OF CSU WERE ONLY THING WHICH INTERESTED HIM. IF IT SHOULD BE MORE ADVANTAGEOUS FOR CSU THAT HE REMAIN IN BUNDESTAG, HE WOULD DO SO. IF HE WERE TO COME TO BAVARIA, IT WOULD NOT BE TO REST. HE VOWED TO REMAIN INVOLVED IN BAVARIAN, GERMAN AND EUROPEAN POLITICS IN ANY POST TO WHICH HE WAS CALLED. WHAT IS DECISIVE IS "THAT BAVARIA REMAIN BAVARIA, GERMANY BECOME GERMANY AGAIN AND THAT EUROPE FIND ITS HISTORIC MISSION."

7. COMMENT: IN CONTRAST TO LAST YEAR'S GATHERING, STRAUSS WORE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BAVARIAN "TRACHTEN" SUIT AND AUDIENCE SAT AT TABLES IN BEER HALL FASHION. PASSAU AREA CSU LANDTAG DEPUTY TOLD CONGEN THAT REVERSION TO TRADITIONAL FORMAT WAS RESULT OF POPULAR REQUEST. YOUNG PEOPLE BETWEEN AGES 20 AND 30 MADE UP ONE THIRD OF STRAUSS' AUDIENCE.

8. ALTHOUGH STRAUSS MADE NO RPT NO SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO KREUTH DECISION OF LAST NOVEMBER, HIS ANALYSIS OF STRATEGY CDU AND CSU SHOULD PURSUE IN ORDER TO WIN MAJORITY IN BUNDESTAG WAS BASED ON SAME ARGUMENTS HE USED IN SUPPORT OF KREUTH. BETTS

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